



Transit priorities

Light rail project on track

Rep. Pastor instrumental in steering federal commitment

The Valley's light rail project took a giant step forward recently when the federal government signed an agreement committing \$587 million towards its share of costs.

Rep. Ed Pastor joined Federal Transit Administrator Jenna Dorn and several Valley mayors to witness the signing of the federal funding grant agreement that will pay nearly half of the construction costs of the 20-mile starter line.

"This is a significant project for the federal government and this funding commitment is evidence of that," Pastor said. "I have supported this project from the beginning because it will help our Valley meet its transit needs while boosting our economy."



Rep. Ed Pastor (center) met with Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon and Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs during the recent signing event where the federal government formally agreed to commit \$587 million for the Valley's light rail project.

Light rail fact sheet

Participants:	Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa Valley Metro Rail oversees the project.	
Route length:	Total	20 miles
	Phoenix	13.34 miles
	Tempe	5.5 miles
	Mesa	.97 miles
Travel times:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approx. an hour end to end. - 23 mins. from downtown Phoenix to Tempe. - 21 mins. from 19th Avenue and Bethany Home Road to downtown Phoenix. 	
Cost/Budget:	Current cost is \$1.3 billion.	
Schedule:	Opening by December 2008.	



U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor announces the light rail project's federal funding agreement at a meeting that included, from left to right, Federal Transit Administrator Jenna Dorn, Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon and Valley Metro Rail Chief Executive Rick Simonetta.

Bilingual nursing program graduates first class



U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor recently spoke about the critical need for bilingual nurses in the Valley at the “pinning” of 20 nurses enrolled in the Bilingual Nursing Fellowship Program, which receives federal funds.

Pastor was instrumental in securing \$300,000 in funding for the program, a joint effort of South Mountain and Gateway community colleges and Banner Health System.

The “pinning” is the first step of the program as the students become licensed practical nurses. They will continue studying to become registered nurses.

Rep. Pastor congratulates students who finished the first part of the Bilingual Nursing Fellowship Program.

How to contact Congressman Pastor

Congressman Ed Pastor's office is in your city to serve your needs.

Please keep this information handy to contact his offices for assistance.

Web Page (use site for electronic mail): <http://www.house.gov/pastor>

Washington Office

2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0302
Phone: (202) 225-4065

Phoenix District Office

411 N. Central Ave., Suite 150
Phoenix, AZ 85004
Phone: (602) 256-0551

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEND MAIL ONLY TO MY PHOENIX DISTRICT OFFICE.

Due to the threat of anthrax-contaminated mail delivered to the Capitol complex, all incoming letters to my Washington Office must be irradiated before delivery, resulting in a delay of at least three weeks. Feel free to send mail instead to my Phoenix District Office. Thanks.

✂ *Clip and save* ✂

Congressman

Ed Pastor

WASHINGTON REPORT

First 100 Days

June 2005

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CONGRESSMAN

Ed Pastor

WASHINGTON REPORT

First 100 Days

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Fourth Congressional District - Arizona

June 2005

Working for America's values

Dear Fellow Arizonans,

As your Congressman, I believe it is my responsibility to defend the values that we as Americans and Arizonans cherish. In that respect, during the first 100 days of Congress this year, I have continued to work with my colleagues to draw attention to the plight of many middle-class families who are being squeezed at the pump, at the pharmacy and in the grocery store. There are growing signs of a faltering economy, yet the President and the majority in Congress continue to focus on legislation that will actually harm middle class families.

In addition, the President recently confirmed that his partial privatization plan would force cuts in Social Security benefits for the middle class. This news came after the President announced a

budget that cuts health care for children, seniors and the disabled, and shortchanges veterans' health care programs.

I am working with many colleagues to restore moral and fiscal responsibility to the budget and to protect the Social Security benefits Americans have earned. We will continue to defend the key values that are the foundation of a strong and secure middle class.

I hope you will read this update and find it useful.

Sincerely,

Ed Pastor
Member of Congress



Social Security privatization debated

U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor, seated at the far left, listens to Sen. Harry Reid, of Nevada, discuss the problems the proposed privatization of Social Security would create. Pastor was joined by Reid and Sens. Byron L. Dorgan, of North Dakota, (seated next to Pastor) and Richard Durbin, of Illinois, at a Social Security town hall meeting held at the Phoenix Civic Plaza in February. More than 300 constituents attended the forum and offered comments about the issue.

Social Security works for us

As your Congressman, I am committed to strengthening Social Security so that it will benefit generations to come. Social Security faces long term challenges that must be addressed, but there is no crisis. That is why I am very concerned that the President's proposal to "fix" the program undermines the qualities that make it so valuable.

The President's plan to create private Social Security accounts that Americans could invest in the stock market would not only subject Social Security benefits to the risk of market fluctuation, but would do nothing to address the program's projected funding deficit. Such a plan would gamble the hard earned money that seniors need in retirement. Furthermore, establishing private accounts would increase the federal deficit by nearly \$5 trillion,

weakening our nation's economy.

Most recently, the President proposed an idea called "progressive indexing," which would reduce the long term shortfall in Social Security funding at the expense of middle class Americans. Under this plan, all Americans who earned an average of more than \$20,000 a year would get less than they would under the current benefit structure. At least 70 percent of Americans would see their benefits cut by as much as 50 percent.

I am willing to discuss responsible ways of fixing the long-term shortfall in Social Security funding (i.e. adjusting the cap on FICA-taxed wages to keep up with wage growth). Be assured, however, that I will not accept an indexing or



Rep. Ed Pastor led a town hall discussion recently with constituents about Social Security and discussed his opposition to private accounts.

privatization plan that undermines the economic security of Americans who have paid into the system for decades on the promise that Social Security would be there for them when they needed it.

Social Security benefit changes proposed by the President

The President's "progressive indexing" plan would result in benefit cuts that increase with earnings. The following examples show how Americans at different income levels would be affected:



Average Annual Income Level

Less than \$20,000
\$37,000
\$58,000
\$90,000

Expected Benefit Cut

No Cut
28 percent cut
42 percent cut
49 percent cut



Pastor helping homebuyers

Rep. Ed Pastor met with representatives of the nonprofit Family Housing Resources and other officials to discuss housing issues in Congress and ways to make housing more affordable for low- and middle-income families in Arizona. Recent reports about the Valley housing market indicate that the median price of an existing home has jumped about 35 percent during the past year. This has made it difficult for many families to pursue the American dream of homeownership, Pastor said.

Rep. Pastor met with James Feltham and Carlos Alcazar of Family Housing Resources in March to discuss affordable housing.

Pastor: 2006 proposed budget cuts harm families, veterans, cities

As your Congressman, it is my responsibility to ensure that the policies we pursue are consistent with the values we cherish. However, during the first 100 days in Congress, we saw the Administration introduce a 2006 federal budget which imposes numerous cuts to vital programs and trims in-



vestment in important opportunities. I cannot support cuts to health care, education, veterans benefits and other key programs if we are to maintain a strong and secure middle class in America. I am committed to upholding the key values we cherish of national security, prosperity, community, fairness, accountability and opportunity as we continue to make budget decisions in Congress.

Below are some of the cuts that have been proposed by the Administration.

Harmful cuts proposed in President's 2006 budget

Health: Medicaid receives a gross cut of \$60 billion over ten years and a net cut of \$45 billion.

Education: 48 programs eliminated and 16 others cut, with an overall cut for 2006 of \$530 million.

Veterans: Increased fees and co-payments veterans must pay for medical care costing more than \$1.2 billion over five years.

Environment: Clean air, clean water and other environmental protection cut by nearly \$500 million (5.6 percent) for 2006.

Small Business: a cut for 2006 of 37.9 percent to Small Business Administration technical assistance programs that help entrepreneurs, and elimination of the microloan program.

Law Enforcement: cuts for 2006 of 95.6 percent to community-oriented policing programs

Community Development Block Grants: Transfers CDBG program to Commerce Department with a 35 percent cut, resulting in \$1.16 billion less for low-income housing.

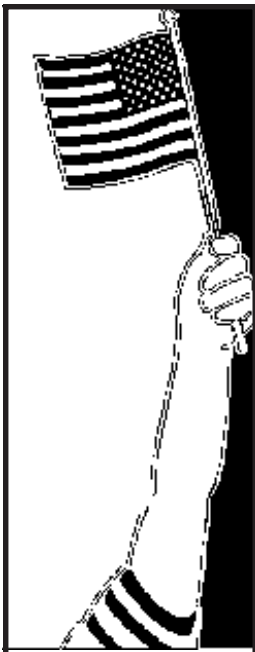
Rep. Pastor recognized as friend of national parks, conservation efforts

U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor has been given a Friend of the National Parks award by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) for his work in Congress towards protecting and enhancing America's national parks. The award was based on his voting record for the 108th Congress.

The NPCA is a nonpartisan organization that works to protect the park system and on preservation efforts.



National Parks Conservation Association Board of Trustees Chair Gretchen Long, Rep. Ed Pastor and NPCA President Tom Kiernan met recently when they honored the Congressman for his voting record on national parks.



U.S. citizenship effort will be held on July 9

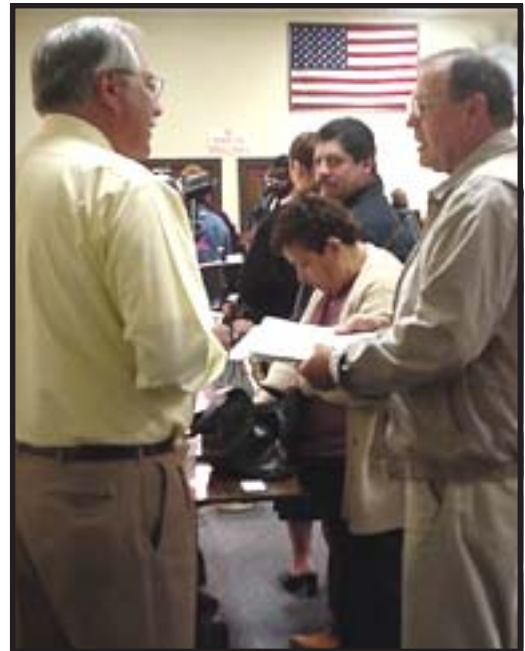
Rep. Ed Pastor continues to encourage legal residents to apply for U.S. citizenship by holding naturalization workshops in his district. The next one is planned for Saturday, July 9 in Phoenix.

At the workshop, permanent legal residents who qualify to apply for U.S. citizenship will receive assistance in filling out their citizenship applications. The workshops are held in cooperation with Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc., and more than 50 volunteers who regularly provide complimentary assistance in the community. The trained volunteers ease the application process by assisting participants with their applications and answering questions.

To register for the July 9 workshop, or for more information, please contact Congressman Pastor's Phoenix District Office at 602-256-0551.

While assistance is provided at no charge, there is a \$390 fee currently charged by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to apply. Immigration photos will be available for \$12, if needed.

The location of the workshop will be provided to individuals as they register.



U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor discusses the naturalization process with a constituent at a citizenship workshop held in Phoenix in February.

To become a U.S. citizen, a person must:

- Have been a legal permanent resident of the United States for at least five years (or only three years if married to a U.S. citizen for at least three years).
- Speak, read and write in English.
- Have knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and government.
- Have good moral character.

**Sign up for the
Citizenship Workshop
by July 5 at
602-256-0551**

Glendale veteran lauded for bravery



Glendale veteran "Teddy" T. Mickelson, Sr., 75, who as an Air Force Flight engineer and mechanic flew in and out of 22 countries during 26 years of honorable military service, was presented with a Bronze Star and three other prestigious military medals by Rep. Ed Pastor this year to honor him for his service. In the photo on the left, wearing his Air Force blues, Mickelson describes some harrowing experiences, including one emergency landing when only a "teaspoon" of fuel remained on his B-52.